

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03

COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAJ-01 NEA-10 NIC-01

DRC-01 /122 W

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R 111730Z APR 74

FM USMISSIO EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WAHSDC 6715

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, XT

SUBJECT: ETUC:CGIL MEETING LEAVES CGIL ISSUE UNRESOLVED

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REF: EC BRUSSELS 1754

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THE APRIL 10 MEETING BETWEEN LEADERS OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) AND THE THREE ITALIAN NATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, CGIL, CISL, AND UIL, FAILED TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE OF CGIL AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC. THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL MEET ON MAY 9 IN AN ATTEMPT TO REACH AGREEMENT PRIOR TO THE ETUC CONGRESS IN COPENHAGEN NEXT MONTH. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF INTENSE OPPOSITION FROM THE GERMAN DGB AND THE ICFTU, THE QUESTION OF CGIL MEMBERSHIP IS AGAIN IN DOUBT. END SUMMARY.

2. CONFUSION REIGNS IN ICFTU AND ETUC CIRCLES HERE IN BRUSSELS FOLLOWING THE APRIL 10 MEETING BETWEEN ETUC AND CGIL

LEADERS WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY WAS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE LAST, ALMOST PRO FORMA, STEPS IN THE PROCESS LEADING TO CGIL AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC. THE QUESTION OF THE CGIL'S "ASSOCIATED" STATUS WITH THE COMMUNIST WFTU, THOUGHT TO BE A NON-ISSUE JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO, PRECIPITATED A DEADLOCK WITH GERMAN DGB PRESIDENT VETTER REPORTEDLY INSISTING ON A COMPLETE SEVERANCE OF THE CGIL-WFTU CONNECTION.

3. ACCORDING TO ICFTU SOURCES, THE DGB DECIDED AT ITS APRIL 2 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING TO PRESENT A LIST OF 10 QUESTIONS TO THE CGIL AT THE APRIL 10 MEETING IN AN EFFORT TO ELICIT CERTAIN ASSURANCES FROM THE CGIL AS A PRECONDITION TO GERMAN SUPPORT FOR CGIL MEMBERSHIP IN THE ETUC. THE MISSION HAS BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE LIST BUT HAS LEARNED THAT CLARIFICATION OF THE CGIL "ASSOCIATED" STATUS WITH THE WFTU AND A COMMITMENT TO DISSOLVE THE BRUSSELS-BASED CGIL-CGT (FRANCE) PERMANENT COMMITTEE, WERE CHIEF AMONG THE GERMAN DEMANDS.

4. PRIOR TO THE APRIL 10 MEETING, ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY KERSTEN HAD ADVISED ETUC GENERAL SECRETARY RASSCHAERT, IN WRITING, THAT A DECISION TO ADMIT THE CGIL AS LONG AS IT RETAINED A RELATIONSHIP, ASSOCIATED OR OTHERWISE, WITH THE WFTU, WOULD BE CONTRARY TO AN ICFTU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISION TAKEN AT VIENNA IN JULY 1973 WHICH EFFECTIVELY DENIED ETUC MEMBERSHIP TO WFTU AFFILIATES. KERSTEN TOLD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RASSCHAERT THAT THE UNANIMOUS ICFTU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISION AT VIENNA REFERRED ONLY TO WFTU AFFILIATES AND NOT TO MEMBERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL).

5. ITALIAN HOPES FOR RESOLVING THE ISSUE AT YESTERDAY'S MEETING WERE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE ABSENCE OF ETUC PRESIDENT FEATHER AND BELGIAN FGFB LEADER DEBUNNE BOTH OF WHOM HAVE BEEN PROPONENTS OF CGIL ADMISSION. DEBUNNE WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND

BECAUSE OF HIS PARTICIPATION IN HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS AIMED AT RESOLVING THE CURRENT BELGIAN GOVERNMENTAL CRISIS. FEATHER'S ABSENCE WAS UNEXPLAINED BUT GAVE CREDENCE TO RUMORS THAT THE BRITISH TUC HAS DECIDED TO BACK AWAY FROM THE CGIL ISSUE FOR THE TIME BEING IN ORDER TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION WITH THE DGB WITHIN THE ETUC.

6. ICFTU LEADERS, ALREADY DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE WEAKENING OF THE ICFTU AS A NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF CGIL ADMISSION TO THE ETUC, ARE NOW WORRIED ABOUT THE ITALIAN SITUATION. THE ITALIANS REPORTEDLY WARNED THE ETUC LEADERS AT THE APRIL 10 MEETING THAT A DECISION AGAINST CGIL ADMISSION COULD FORCE THE THREE ITALIAN ORGANIZATIONS TO DISAFFILIATE FROM BOTH INTERNATIONALS, THE ICFTU AND THE WFTU, IN ORDER TO INSURE TRADE UNION UNITY IN ITALY AND THUS TO FACILITATE SUBSEQUENTLY CGIL ADMISSION TO THE ETUC. BRUNO STORI TOLD ICFTU OFFICIALS THAT IF THE ITALIANS WERE FORCED INTO SUCH A POSITION, HE WOULD BE UNABLE TO MUSTER ENOUGH VOTES IN THE CISL TO AVOID DISAFFILIATION FROM THE ICFTU.

7. THE ONLY AGREEMENT REACHED AT THE ETUC-CGIL MEETING WAS THAT THE APRIL 10 MEETING WOULD BE THE LAST MEETING BETWEEN LEADERS OF THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS. THE BALL IS NOW IN THE

ETUC'S COURT AND THE CGIL REPORTEDLY WILL NOT OFFICIALLY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR ETUC MEMBERSHIP UNTIL THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CLARIFIES ITS POSITION.

8. COMMENT. DESPITE THEIR CONCERN, ICFTU AND ETUC

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SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS DO NOT BELIEVE THE ITALIANS WILL RESORT
TO DISAFFILIATION FROM THE ICFTU AS LONG AS THE CGIL
ADMISSION ISSUE IS KEPT ALIVE. HOWEVER, IF THE BRITISH TUC
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IS INDEED GIVING GROUND IN ORDER TO PLACATE THE GERMANS, THE
ITALIANS COULD BE LEFT WITHOUT ANY ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION.
THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE PROPONENTS OF CGIL ADMISSION
HAVING SUFFICIENT VOTES IN THE ETUC TO CARRY THE DAY. THE
GERMANS ARE IN A DISTINCT MINORITY AND NOW APPEAR TO BE
FIGHTING A LOSING BATTLE WHICH MAY ONLY POSTPONE THE INEVITABLE.
THE NET LOSER IN THIS WHOLE PROCEEDING WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE
THE ICFTU. CGIL MEMBERSHIP IN THE ETUC SEEMS ASSURED
AND MERELY A QUESTION OF TIME. WHEN IT DOES OCCUR,
THE ICFTU COULD BE RELEGATED TO RUMBLE SEAT STATUS IN
WEST EUROPEAN TRADE UNION AFFAIRS. KERSTEN AND THE GERMANS
ARE AWARE OF THIS AND ARE APPARENTLY PULLING ALL STOPS
IN ORDER TO SWITCH THE CGIL ISSUE FROM THE MAY 23-25 ETUC
CONGRESS AT COPENHAGEN TO THE MAY 30-31 ICFTU EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE IN BRUSSELS. HOWEVER, DEBUNNE AND OTHER CGIL
SUPPORTERS COULD OPT TO FORCE THE ISSUE AT THE MAY 9 ETUC
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN AN EFFORT TO OFFSET THE GERMAN INITIA-
TIVE. MEANWHILE, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE DGB HAS BEEN DOING
SOME HORSE TRADING WITH THE ETUC PRESIDENCY, OFFERING THE

JOB TO DENMARK'S THOMAS NIELSEN IN EXCHANGE FOR SCANDINAVIAN
SUPPORT FOR THE GERMAN POSITION ON THE CGIL ISSUE. MYERSON

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